CQC
Citygate
Gallowgate
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
NE1 4PA

E: HRqueries@cqc.org.uk
T: 0191 233 3631
www.cqc.org.uk

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Barry Hutchinson – Royal College of Nursing
Rose Willis – Prospect
Matthew Egan – Unison
Jayne Craven – PCS
Richard Munn – Unite

21 October 2025

Dear Full Time Trade Union Officers,

I am writing to inform you that we have received ministerial approval for our submission relating to the Civil Service Pay Remit Guidance for 2025/26.

CQC is required to set its pay for delegated grades (A – F) within the framework of the annual Civil Service Pay Remit Guidance. This year's guidance allowed us to make a headline award of 3.25% and to apply an additional 0.5% to address specific workforce issues.

We have once more sought to use the full extent of the freedoms that guidance provides.

Response to the 2025 Joint Trade Union Pay Claim

We have carefully considered the union claim for a 10% pay increase (or £4,000, whichever is greater). Although the terms of Civil Service Pay Remit Guidance do not permit us to make increases at this rate, we are proposing to apply the maximum 3.25% increase to all colleagues in delegated grades.

You also sought a minimum rate of £15 an hour and increases to main allowances of between 10% and 100%. Introducing these rates would prevent us from delivering the full 3.25% salary increase to colleagues in delegated grades while remaining within the terms of the remit guidance.

However, we are proposing a 5% salary increase to colleagues in Grade F and an increase in main allowances of 3.25% to match the rate of the headline award. During negotiations you requested that we consider revalorising the maxima of salary scales by the same percentage as the main award to enable those at the top of their salary scale to receive a consolidated increase. I am pleased to say that we have incorporated this suggestion into our proposals.

We are also proposing a revalorisation of salary scale minima by the rates set out later in this letter to address compression in the lower end of our pay structure. This will have the effect of providing pay increases of above 3.25% for those colleagues who are furthest from the mid-point of their salary scale.

You requested an increase to annual leave entitlement for all staff by 1 day and to reduce the standard working week by 2 hours with no loss of pay. However, after careful consideration, we are unable to take this forward currently. As you will be aware, changes of this nature would need to be accommodated within the overall pay award and consistent with previous years, our priority has been to focus available flexibilities on enhancing colleagues' salaries.

Your claim additionally sought a full overhaul of pay scales and requested that we explore moving colleagues to Agenda for Change terms and conditions. Both the Chief Executive and Chair have acknowledged the depth of feeling among colleagues on issues relating to pay, and while our immediate focus must remain on improving organisational performance, we are committed to continuing constructive dialogue with colleagues and with you to explore meaningful and sustainable ways forward.

Scope of the 2025/26 pay offer
The proposed consolidated pay offer will be effective from 1st September 2025. If the offer is accepted following the ballot, we aim to implement the proposals in December 2025, with all increases backdated to 1st September 2025.
The pay offer covers all CQC colleagues other than those within the senior leadership grade structure of Executive grades 1, 2, and 3. Information about the award to colleagues in the Executive 3 grade is provided for your reference.

Content of the 2025/26 Pay Offer

- A 3.25% pay award for Grades Executive 3 to E in post on 1 September 2025.
- Uplifting the spot rate pay point for Grade F by 5%, ensuring an above-average consolidated pay award for our lowest grade.
- Increases to London Allowance, Homeworkers' Allowance, and Occupational Car Users' Allowance by 3.25% for Grades A-F.
- Uplifting the maximum of pay scales for Grades Executive 3 to E by 3.25% and Grade F by 5%.
- Uplifting the minimum of pay scales for Grades Executive 3 to F by varying percentages between 2.78% and 7.45%, depending on grade. Further detail on proposed changes to pay scales are outlined below.

<u>Current national pay scales</u>

	Minimum	Maximum
E3	£73,150	£104,500
A	£52,737	£66,197
B	£39,784	£49,477
C	£32,471	£38,235
D	£28,504	£31,954
E	£24,971	£28,016
F	£24,541	£24,541

<u>New national pay scales</u>

	Minimum	Maximum
E3	£75,183	£107,896
A	£55,172	£68,348
B	£42,044	£51,085
C	£34,890	£39,478
D	£30,373	£32,993
E	£26,732	£28,927
F	£25,768	£25,768

Current London pay scales				New London pay scales		
	Minimum	Maximum			Minimum	Maximum
E3	£73,150	£104,500		E3	£75,183	£107,896
A	£58,409	£71,869		A	£61,028	£74,204
B	£45,456	£55,149		B	£47,900	£56,941
C	£38,143	£43,907		C	£40,746	£45,334
D	£34,176	£37,626		D	£36,229	£38,849
E	£30,643	£33,688		E	£32,588	£34,783
F	£30,213	£30,213		F	£31,624	£31,624

Proposed changes to London allowance have been factored into the London scales set out above.

The pay award will be pro-rated for part-time colleagues.
All eligible colleagues will receive a letter confirming their individual outcome from the pay award ahead of its implementation.

Conclusion
This year, we have once again sought to use the full permissions allowed by government guidance. In doing so, we have attempted to balance the needs of our valued colleagues with ensuring our pay structure is fair and sustainable.
We trust that you will recommend the pay offer to your members for the forthcoming ballot process.

Thank you for your constructive engagement in the 2025/26 pay negotiations. We value the partnership we have developed with the joint trade unions and look forward to ongoing dialogue on the broader issues raised in your pay claim.

Yours sincerely,

JJackson

Jacqueline Jackson
Director of People
Care Quality Commission